
EXALTED STATUS OF THE HOLY PROPHET AS THE KHATAMUN NABIYEEN

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(This very timely subject was the topic of two speeches given at the Ahmadiyya Annual Conventions in the USA (June 1987) and England (July 1987) by Sahibzada M. M. Ahmad. The arguments given here will convince any fair minded person that the charge made by the anti-Ahmadiyya Ulema that Ahmadies do not believe in Khatm-e-Nabuwat is utterly baseless and full mischief.)

Ahmadies believe firmly, fervently, without any ambiguity or reservation and with all their heart and soul, that the Holy Prophet of Islam, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is **Khatamun Nabiyeen**. He was, and will ever remain, the greatest Prophet of all times-past, present and future-and his *Shariah* will remain unaltered and the guiding code and law till doomsday.

Those opposed to Ahmadiyyat have carried out a vigorous campaign of falsification that Ahmadies do not believe in *Khatam-i-Nabuwat* and, (نَعُوْزُ بِاللّٰهِ) God forbid, are guilty of down-grading the exalted and supreme status of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. This is a cruel, utterly and totally false accusation and can certainly be described and counted as the biggest-lie of the century-if not of all times.

They have made this false charge from all pulpits and have made it so repeatedly that a large section of Muslims, who have not cared to check this accusation by referring to the books of the Founder of the Community and other Ahmadiyya literature, have been tricked into believing it.

It is incumbent on every Muslim to look into the conflicting claims and decide who is right. This can best be done by recourse to our admittedly common heritage and the source of all guidance. In other words we should first of all examine:

1. Which claim is supported by the Holy Quran.
2. What is the verdict of the Hadith-a record of the sayings of and annunciations by the Holy Prophet.

3. What was the interpretation of the *Khatamun Nabiyeen* verse by known eminent scholars and religious divines over the past 14 centuries.
4. Which view is more logical and rational.

Before we proceed to examine which of the two claims is correct in the light of the four possible tests just described, we should clarify two points:

First, whether *Nabuwat*, i.e., prophethood is only of a single variety or whether there are different types/kinds of prophethood.

Secondly, we should then proceed to learn directly from the writings of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, as to his faith and belief in *Khatme Nabuwat* and not through second hand or distorted versions.

The study of the Holy Quran, the Hadith and religious history shows that prophets are of 3 distinct types:

- (i) First, there are those prophets who are commissioned by God to introduce a new *Shariah*, a new code of law. These are the law bearing prophets. This type of Prophethood is known as (*تشریعی نبوت*) *Tashreey Nabuwat* or (*حقیقی نبوت*) *Haqiqi Nabuwat* and is the real hard core of prophethood. Obvious examples are Moses and of course the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who respectively brought *Torah* and the *Holy Quran*.
- (ii) Next to them are those prophets who are not law-bearers but only serve the previous *Shariah* of an earlier law-bearing Prophet. The obvious examples are Hazrat Da'ood (David), Jesus Christ and others who came in fulfillment of Mosaic law and code but were otherwise independent and did not derive their prophethood through a direct linkage with the preceding law-bearing prophet. As such prophets derive their prophethood without intervention, or linkage with any law-bearing prophet, this type of prophethood is described as (*مستقل*) *Mustaqil*, i.e., permanent or independent prophethood.
- (iii) The third and last category of prophets is one which is a mere reflection of an earlier law-bearing prophet. It is not independent but derives its divine origin through total submission and homage to a previous law-bearing prophet. The relationship of such a prophet with the law-bearing prophet is one of servant

and master. He has no independent existence of his own and such prophethood is termed as (*غلتزبت*) *Zilli-Nabuwat*, because it merely reflects the prophethood of another as the moon reflects the light of the sun and has no independent or separate light of its own.

The Ahmadiyya belief on *Khatme Nubuwa*t is that the first two types of prophethoods, namely *Haqiqi Nabuwat* which brings a new law and code with it and *Mustaqil Nabuwat*, i.e., a prophethood though not law-bearing, is nevertheless free of any other dependence and linkages, have both now ceased to exist after the advent of the Holy Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. With his advent the only type of prophethood which remains is one which serves *Shariah-i-Muhammadi* — Muhammadi Law, as embodied in the Holy Quran, without an iota of change in it. It draws its inspiration and legitimacy from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, with whom it retains the relationship of Master and Servant and to whom it remains totally subservient.

Let us now go to the direct source of Ahmadiyya views on *Khatamun Nabiyeen* as annunciated by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Community in his writings and in his own words.

Recalling his status as the Promised Messiah and the divinely bestowed title of prophethood, he says in his book, *Tajalliyat-i-Ilahiya*, (pages 24-25):

“This status and title has been bestowed on me only because I am a true follower and servant of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on on him. If I had not been from his *Ummah* and if I had not been his follower, then even if my services and talents had been as massive and tall as all the mountains of this world, I would not have acquired or been bestowed the title and honor of direct communication with God. This is true because now all doors to prophethood are closed except the portal and prophethood of The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. After him there can be no independent prophet with a new law or code. Now the only type of prophethood which survives is that which is without any new *Shariah* other than that of Islam and which is bestowed on a true follower or servant of the Holy Prophet of Islam.”

Again in 1905 in the newspaper *Alhakam*, Hazrat Mirza

Ghulam Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, vigorously asserts:

“The accusation levelled against me and my community that we do not believe The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, to be *Khatamun Nabiyeen* is a colossal lie. The force, the certainty, the passion and the solid conviction with which we believe him to be *Katamul Anbiya* is so strong and overwhelming and of such excellence that it is a million times stronger than the belief of our accusers.”

His books and writings are indeed ridden with homage and subservience to the Holy Prophet. Thus in his book *Humamat-ul-Bushra*, page 8, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad calls God as his witness regarding his faith in *Khatme-Nabuwat*. Listen to how unequivocal and unambiguous is his statement on a *Solemn oath*.

“I swear by Allah the Mighty and the Glorious that I am a true believer (*مؤمن*) and a Muslim. I have full faith and belief in Allah the Almighty, His revealed Books, His prophets, His Angels and the life after death. I have full faith and truly believe that our Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, is the greatest of all prophets and is *Khatamun Nabiyeen*.”

Again in his book *Azala-i-Auham*, the Promised Messiah states his belief and stand on *Khatme Nabawat* in the following words:

“The sum total and the essence of our belief is enshrined in

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

The strong faith which we uphold in this life and with which, by God's Grace, we shall leave this worldly abode is that our lord and Master, Muhammad Mustafa, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, is *Khatumun Nabiyeen* and *Khairul Mursaleen*. He is the best of all prophets. With his advent faith was perfected and reached its Zenith and is now the only route which directs man to attain closeness to our Creator.”

The same theme of his homage and subservience to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, is repeated at innumerable places in the 80 odd books which the Promised Messiah wrote in defense and propagation of Islam. Listen to what he says in his book, *Kashti-i-Nooh*.

“From the point of view of faith and belief, all that God

expects from you is to believe that there is only One God and that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is His Prophet and is *Khatamul-Anbia* and the greatest of all the prophets.”

In his public address on October 23, 1891 he proclaimed:

“Any one who does not beleive in *Khatme Nabuwat* is without faith and outside the pale of Islam.”

Again, he reasserts:

“All the doors to reach prophethood are closed except one of total obedience and through complete dedication to the Holy Prophet of Islam.” (*Aik Ghalti Ka Azala*)

“Through God’s grace and bounty alone, and not because of any merit of my own, I have been bestowed in full measure the status and glory bestowed on God’s prophets, messengers and His loved ones. It would have been utterly impossible for me to attain it if I had not walked in humility and servitude in the footsteps of my lord and master, the crown and pride of all prophets and the best among them, namely, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa, peace and blessings of God be on him. Whatever I am is because of him and out of total submission to him. I know it for sure that no human being can attain closeness to God and partake of His bounties without total submission to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him.”

(*Haqiqat-ul-Wahee*, page 62.)

Again in the 1884 edition of *Baraheen-i-Ahmadiyya*, the Promised Messiah describes his own position in the following terms:

“I am among the humblest of servants of that glorious Prophet who is the crown and indeed the greatest of all the prophets.”

The same relationship of master and servant between the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, and himself is described by Hazrat Mirza Sahib in many of his verses in three languages—Urdu, Arabic and Persian. A few examples are:

وہ پیشوا ہمارا جس سے ہے نور سارا۔ نام اس کا ہے محمدؐ لبر مرزا سی ہے
اس نور پر فدا ہوں اس کا ہی میں ہوا ہوں۔ وہ ہے میں چیز کیا ہوں بل فیصلہ ہی ہے

That one leader of mine who is the source of all light; his name is Hazrat Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and he alone is my beloved. I am beholden to that light and my soul and my everything belongs to him and are in his service. In brief he is everything and I am nothing. This indeed is the real position.

Again in another poem he says:

ہم تو رکھتے ہیں مسلمانوں کا دین ۔ دل سے ہیں خدامِ ختم المرسلین
شُرک اور بدعت سے ہم بیزار ہیں ۔ خاکِ راہِ احمدِ مقبر ہیں

“I have the same faith as all Muslims and I am a true and humble servant of *Khatam-ul-Mursaleen*. I shun *Shirk* (association of partners with Allah) and deviance from the right path. I am just a particle of dust in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet of Islam.”

In one of his Persian poems, in response to accusations that he was a *Kafir*—a non-believer in Islam, he told his accusers:

بعد از خدِ العشق محمدِ مہرزم ۔ مگر کفر ایں بود بخدا سمنت کا فرم

“You call me non-believer but I am consumed and wholly absorbed first in the love of God and next to it in the love of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him). If these two all consuming loves make one a non-believer then by God I am the greatest of all non-believers.”

Hazrat Mirza Sahib displayed his deep and abiding love for his master, Hazrat Muhammad, peace and blessings of God be on him, throughout the voluminous literature which he produced. This is displayed as if it was an uncontrollable torrent which found expression whenever he held a pen in his hand. His unequalled homage to the Holy Prophet is given in one of his Persian poems:

عجب نوریت در جانِ محمد ۔ عجب تعلیت در کانِ محمد
اگر خواہی دلیے عاشقش باش ۔ محمد بہت بر مانِ محمد
دریں راہ گر کشندم در لبوزند ۔ نتاہم زو بہ ایوانِ محمد
تو جانِ مامنوہ کردی از عشق ۔ فدایت جانم لے جانِ محمد

“In the person of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) God has concentrated a unique divine light. It is like a mine overflowing with precious stones of unique excellence. O ye who refuse to

accept him, if you are in search of a reason to believe the truth of his claim then know that his personality itself is an embodiment of truth.

“By God if I am cut to pieces and every piece of my body is burnt and turned into ashes, even then I will not turn away from his bondage. So O ye soul of Muhammad, I gladly sacrifice my life for you. Indeed every part of me is lit up with thy burning love and affection.”

Again in an Arabic poem he addresses the Holy Prophet in the following terms:

أَنْظُرْ إِلَى بَرَحْمَةٍ وَتَحَنَّنْ يَا سَيِّدِي أَنَا أَحَقُّ الْعِبَادِ
يَا حَبِيبَ أَنْكَ تَدْعُوتُ مَحَبَّةً فِي مَهْجَتِي وَمَذَارِكِي وَجَنَانِي

“O my Master, turn to me with thy affection and blessings. I am the humblest of your servants.

O my beloved, thy love has taken full possession and control of my body, heart and soul.

O ye the garden of all my delights and happiness, I do not pass a moment of my life without your memory.

My soul is already yours alone and my body yearns to fly to you, how I wish I had the power and capacity to fly!!”

Again in one of his Persian poems, Hazrat Mirza Sahib pays his tribute and homage to the Holy Prophet in the following verses:

آن رسوله کش محمد بہت نام۔ دامن پاکش بدست مادم
بہت او خیر الاسل خیر الانام۔ ہر نبوت را برد شد اختتام
بہچنین عشقم برے مصطفیٰ۔ دل برد چون مریم سرے مصطفیٰ

“That prophet whose name is Muhammed, His pure and faultless guidance alone I hold firmly in my hands.

“He is the best of all prophets and the best of all mankind. In his person all the attributes and blessings of prophethood have reached their perfection.

“My love for the Prophet is deep and abiding. O how I wish to fly like a bird towards him with all my heart and longings.”

The Promised Messiah in his book *Itmamul Hujjah* writes as

follows in his homage to the Holy Prophet:

“The blessed Prophet, the *Khatamul Anbiyaa*, the seal of the prophets, the pride and crown jewel of the prophets, is Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. O My beloved Lord, shower on this exalted Prophet such blessings and glory as You have not showered on anyone since the creation of this world.”

There is no end to these quotations in which Hazrat Mirza Sahib pays homage to his master, describes himself as his servant and acknowledges fervently and passionately his belief in the Prophet as *Khatmul Mursaleen*. His entire literature, spread over some 80 books, is full of it and he repeatedly reverts back to his all-consuming love and homage to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. I can quote all day and still be nowhere near the end of such quotations. But the few authentic quotations reproduced above should convince any fair-minded person—indeed even an unfair-minded person—that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Community fully believed in the *Khatme Nabuwat* and the exalted, unequalled and unparalleled status of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. Indeed in the initiation form for joining Ahmadiyyat, this belief—that the Holy Prophet is *Khatum-ul-Nabiyyan*—was made an important condition of () initiation into Ahmadiyyat.

Let us see for a moment whether Hazrat Mirza Sahib's belief was confined to his writings only or was it acted upon in his personal life as well.

In this connection, I narrate the story of Pundit Lekhram who was an acknowledged leader of the Arya Samaaj, a sect among the Hindu Community in India. He had repeatedly written abusively against the Holy Prophet of Islam. Pundit Lekhram once saw Hazrat Mirza Sahib on the platform of Lahore Railway Station. He came towards Hazrat Mirza Sahib (who was performing ablution prior to offering prayers) and respectfully greeted him with Salam. Hazrat Mirza Sahib paid no attention. Lekhram, thinking that he had offered his greetings from one side and did not catch the eye of Hazrat Mirza Sahib, turned around and came face to face with him and repeated his Salam. Again there was no response. At that point Pundit Lekhram left with his greetings unanswered. When the Pundit was gone, one of the companions

with Hazrat Mirza Sahib said to him: “Huzoor†, Pundit Lekhram was here offering salutations to you.” Hazrat Mirza Sahib replied, “He abuses my master and offers greeting to me—his servant.” The story speaks volumes about Hazrat Mirza Sahib’s love, respect and devotion for the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him.

Similar to Pundit Lekhram in India, another person, Dr. Alexander Dowie, in America also indulged in vicious abusive campaigns against the Holy Prophet. Hazrat Mirza Sahib told them both to desist from such vilification as it was indecent and becoming intolerable for him. They did not stop, so he turned to His Creator in prayers and solicitations. His prayers were heard and he prophesied that both would die in ignominy within a stipulated period, through God’s design, unless they repent. Both died in total ignominy as prophesied. While the whole Muslim world, including the so-called champions of Islam, slept in deep slumber and engaged in their worldly pursuits, the only heart which throbbed with agony because of the abuses hurled at the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was that of Hazrat Mirza Sahib. He lay prostrate before his Lord seeking an escape from this anguish and did not rest till the abuses ceased with the destruction of the abusive enemies of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him.

Again, I cannot resist reproducing two quotations from Hazrat Mirza Sahib’s writings describing his agony whenever any one attacked the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. In his book *Ayeena Kamalat-i-Islam* he says with great pathos:

“If these people (who abuse the Holy Prophet) had killed our children before our very eyes and cut to pieces our relatives and dear ones and had killed us all in ignominy and had taken possession of all that we owned, then I swear by God—and I repeat this oath—that all this would not have hurt and caused us more agony than the abuses which they hurl at our Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him.”

Again in the last book which he finished writing 24 hours before his death, *Paigham-i-Sulh*, He says:

“I say it with truth and the whole truth that we can live in

† *Huzoor* is used as a title of respect for Hazrat Mirza Sahib.

peace with venomous snakes and the wolves of the jungle but cannot extend a hand of harmony and peace to those who make filthy attacks on our beloved Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, who is dearer to us than our lives and the lives of our parents.”

If propagation of Islam is any indication of a people's faith and devotion to the religion brought by the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, then the record of Ahmadies is unequalled by any other sect in Islam. Ahmadies constitute a tiny minority of 10 million worldwide against a total population of over 800 million Muslims in the world. Yet Ahmadi propagation efforts have not been matched by all the other 70 odd sects of Islam put together despite their number and wealth. Ahmadi missionaries have been in the forefront of the fight waged against Islam by Christianity and have converted millions of infidels and Christians, who instead of abusing the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, now offer (ﷺ) homage to him. The wave of conversions from Muslims to Christians in Africa, the Indian subcontinent and other parts of the world, has been turned completely. The reverse flow has begun with such an intensity that the force of it is acknowledged by the bitterest enemies of Ahmadiyyat among the other Muslim sects as well as by acknowledged scholars of Christianity.

Does this phenomenon not tell a story? The motivating force behind this tremendous effort, unequalled since the initial spread of Islam, is none other than the love and devotion to the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. It is a service of the great religion he brought to perfection, the religious process which started with Adam. The inspiration for all this effort, sustained and unrelenting for nearly 100 years, came from Hazrat Mirza Sahib whose divine advent as Messiah and Mehdi was foretold by the Holy Prophet of Islam and by Scriptures of other faiths.

Surely the extracts reproduced from the writings of Hazrat Mirza Sahib, the Promised Messiah, establish beyond any doubt his deep and abiding faith in *Khatme Nabuwat* and his unmatched love and devotion to the Holy Prophet of Islam. He repeatedly described his relationship to him as one of humble servant of a glorious master. His own action and practice in life and the inspired community he created are proof of our crystal clear devotion to the Holy Prophet,

peace and blessings of Allah be on him.

We now proceed to test the veracity of the two conflicting views and interpretations by recourse to the Holy Quran and Hadith which are the two universally acknowledged sources of knowledge and inspiration of the Islamic faith. Their verdict should be decisive.

The very first chapter of the Holy Quran, *Surah Fateha*, enjoins Muslims to offer the prayer

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

“O God guide us in the right path, the path of all those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings.” (1:5-7)

Who are these recipients? This is elaborated in *Surah Nisa*:

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ
وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالْخَالِئِينَ وَحَسَنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا

“And whoso truly obeys God and this Messenger of His shall be among those on whom God has bestowed His blessings, namely the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs and the Righteous.” (4:70).

The *Surah Fateha* is offered by every adult Muslim at least 30 times in every 24 hours. It enjoins the prayer, which is elaborated in *Surah Nisa*, to seek Allah's blessings that He may raise prophets from among the faithful. If prophethood was not to be bestowed in the future, then repeated insistence to pray for such a blessing is futile and without purpose. If that was true, *Surah Fateha* need not have gone beyond the words *the right path* and need not have included the category of *those Thou bestowed Thy blessings* group if that blessed position was totally barred in the future.

The blessings and gift of prophethood is clearly mentioned in verse 70 of *Surah Nisa*, as mentioned above, which specifically relates to the Holy Prophet. In *Surah Hadeed* (57:20), however, the reward for the followers of other prophets makes no mention of a grant of prophethood and restricts the bounty and blessings to other categories, namely, the Truthful and the Martyrs. In other words, the followers of other prophets can look to Allah's bounty in forms other than prophethood in consequence of their relationship to their prophets; whereas the linkage with the Holy Prophet of Islam, besides the 3 categories of the blessed group, specifically includes

prophets as well.

Again in *Surah A'araf*, Allah addressing humanity at large says:

يٰۤاٰدَمُ اِمَّا يٰتِيْبِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْكُمْ يَقْضُوْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ اَلَّذِيْنَ فَرِحْتُمْ
وَاَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ

"O children of Adam! if Messengers come to you from among yourselves, rehearsing My signs unto you (then do not reject them). Indeed you should fear God and do good deeds as then no fear or grief shall touch you." (7:36)

This verse clerly keeps the prospect of advent of prophets in the *Ummah* of Muhammad wide open for those who follow the Holy Prophet and faithfully serve his faith in fulfillment of his mission.

Another verse in the Holy Quran, relating to the advent of the Messiah and Mehdi in the Holy Prophet's *Ummah*, reads:

هُوَ الَّذِيْ بَعَثَ فِي الْاُمَمِ رَسُوْلًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ وَزَيَّنٰهُمْ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَاِنْ كَانُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ
وَالْاٰخِرِيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَكَا اِلٰهٌ حَقُّوْا بِهِمْ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ

"Allah has raised a Prophet in Arabia from amongst the unlettered people (the Arabs), who recites unto them His Signs, purifies them, teaches them the Book and Wisdom when prior to his advent they were clearly in manifest error.

"And He will raise him among others of them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty the Wise." (62:3-4)

i.e., a community which has not yet come into existence but is sure to appear in future, will "join" the companions of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him.

One of the companions asked the Holy Prophet who this latter group was. At that the Holy Prophet laid his hand on the shoulder of a close companion, Hazrat Sulaiman, the Persian, and stated:

"If true faith had disappeared from the earth and had moved up to the (ثَرِيَّا) Pleiades, even then a man from these (i.e., of Persian descent) will bring it back to earth."

It is a historical fact that the Promised Messiah, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, was of Persian descent.

Let us now turn to and carefully ponder over the verse in the Holy Quran (33:41), which unfortunately has become a bone of

contention. This verse reads as follows:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ
وَكَاثِمُ النَّبِيِّينَ

“O ye people, Muhammad is not the father of any male from amongst you but is a Messenger of Allah and is Khatamun Nabbiyeen” (33:41).

Before we dip deeply into its meaning, let us see what was the occasion, the circumstances, and the background for the revelation of this verse.

It is an historical fact that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, lost all his male children while still in Mecca. On this the non-believers in Mecca taunted the Holy Prophet that he was going to die without a male issue and that with his passing away his whole mission would disintegrate into nothing and there would be no one to assume responsibility of his people.

When the Holy Prophet's Meccan enemies taunted him in the above manner, he received the Quranic revelation:

إِنَّا عَظَمْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ۖ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ ۚ إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ ۚ

“Surely we have given thee abundance of good. So pray to thy Lord and offer sacrifice. Surely it is thy enemy who is without issue.” (108:2-4).

When the Holy Prophet migrated to Medina and under divine command (revealed in the beginning of chapter 33) elucidated the correct position on adoption of children in the context of Zaid bin Haris, his enemies repeated their taunt. They called him *Abtar*, i.e., one without a male child, including now the adopted one, thus implying that his movement will wither and die out for want of an heir. It was on the occasion of this repeated taunt that the *Khatamun Nabiyeen* verse in the same chapter (33:41) was received by him in the Quranic revelation.

The verse was designed to answer the taunt of the enemies. It challenged them that although Hazrat Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, has no male issue, he is the Messenger of Allah and as such is the spiritual father of the whole of mankind. In fact he is greater than other prophets in that he is also *Khatamun Nabiyeen*, i.e., the seal of prophets, under whose wings and spiritual upbringing there will be people with the exalted status of

prophets and messengers. Therefore, how dare you call such a person issueless?

This verse of the Holy Quran in no way closes the door to prophethood. It is a great tragedy that the very verse which was intended to describe the exalted and unparalleled status of the Holy Prophet is being interpreted to slam all doors to prophethood. Prophets are Allah's chosen instruments to provide spiritual nourishment to humanity.

If you carefully ponder over this verse, the two key words in it are (لَكِنْ) *Laakin* and (خَاتَمَ) *Khatam*.

The word *Laakin* (like the word 'but' which is its English translation) is used when a statement preceding it is to be contrasted and an exception to it is to be stressed. If we accept the interpretation of the Non-Ahmadi Mullahs, the translation of the verse will be:

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men but he is the last of prophets and that no prophet will come after him and he will firmly close all doors and avenues to such spiritual eminence."

That would be a strange and meaningless reply to the taunt of non-believers that the Holy Prophet will die issueless. Such an interpretation will make the verse out of tune and of no relevance with the context. Indeed, instead of refuting the taunt of disbelievers that the Holy Prophet was issueless, it would only support and reinforce it.

The real answer to the taunt is only in the interpretation by Ahmadies, that disbelievers cannot call the Holy Prophet issueless as he is the Messenger of Allah and *Khatamun Nabiyeen*. *That is, he is the father of a large number of spiritual sons and the seal of prophets. Further, he is the spiritual father of all prophets and there can be no future prophet without his seal of approval.*

The other key word is Khatam which means the seal and connotes authenticity and approval. In other words, although Muhammed, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, is not the father of any men among you, but as the Messenger of Allah, he is the father of a large number of spiritual sons. In fact he is also *Khatamun Nabiyeen*, i.e., the seal of prophets, the father of prophets—who not only confirms prophethood of prophets before

him but without whose approval or insignia no one can attain prophethood in the future. The Holy Prophet's claim: "*I am the leader of the entire human race,*" and again his claim: "*If Moses and Jesus Christ were alive, they too would have been among my followers,*" also confirm the interpretation of the verse which I have explained above.

Having examined and analysed the Holy Quran's verdict on the *Khatamun Nabiyeen* verse, let us seek guidance from the Hadith which, after the Holy Quran, is the next important source of Islamic teachings.

Here we recall the Holy Prophet's famous words uttered by him on the demise of his son:

لَوْ عَاشَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ مِدِّيًّا نَبِيًّا

“If Ibrahim had lived he would have been a prophet.”

Now it is an historically established fact that Ibrahim died some 5 years after the *Khatamun Nabiyeen* verse was revealed to the Holy-Prophet. Yet despite the prior existence of this verse, the Holy Prophet categorically and publicly stated that if his son Ibrahim had lived he would have been a prophet.

This unambiguous utterance of the Holy Prophet clearly rejects any interpretation that the *Khatamun Nabiyeen* verse closes the door of every type of prophethood after him. In fact, this Hadith envisages the appearance of prophets after him.

This is not only our view; indeed the same interpretation on this Hadith is placed by Hazrat Mulla Ali bin Muhammad Sultan Al Qari, an acknowledged divine of the Hanafi school. He says:

“If Ibrahim had lived and had become a prophet even then he would have remained a follower of the Holy Prophet. His prophethood would not have run counter to the Holy Prophet's title *Khatamun Nabiyeen*. This is so because *Khatamun Nabiyeen* simply implies that after the Holy Prophet there cannot be any prophet who brings a new Shariah and is not from his Ummah and his follower.”

This is completely square with the definition and interpretation of *Khatamun Nabiyeen* by Ahmedies.

Let us look at another Hadith according to which the Holy-Prophet was said to have proclaimed:

“Abu Bakr is the most exalted person in my *Ummah*, except the advent of a prophet in future.”

How crystal clear are both these authentic Hadiths in which the Holy Prophet, the recipient of direct revelation and guidance from the Almighty, proclaims the advent of prophets after his death.

There is still another Hadith in *Masnad Ahmad*, Volume 5, page 404, which is given below:

“O ye muslims the present prophethood priod amongst you will last as long as Allah wills. On its conclusion there will be a period of (*خلافت علی منہاج برت*) Khilafat on the design, pattern and succesion of *Nabuwat*, i.e., in continuation of the Prophet’s mission. This Khilafat will be followed by a succession of kingship, which will be followed by dictatorial regimes of tyranny and oppression, which will be followed by non-democratic regimes. On its conclusion there will then begin a second spell of real Khilafat on the model and pattern of the initial Islamic period.”

This Hadith prophetically summarizes the entire history of Islam over the coming fourteen centuries. The concluding period was a reference to the advent of the Promised Messiah and the current period of his successors. This is further confirmed by the insertion in the compilation of Hadith known as *Mishkaat*. The insertion clarifies that the reference to the second period of Khilafat by the Holy Prophet was indeed a reference to the future advent of the Messiah and Mehdi.

There is another Hadith in which the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, himself clearly described that the Messiah which was to come later would be a prophet. This Hadith is as follows:

“Abu Huraira states that the Holy Prophet proclaimed that between him and the advent of the Messiah there will be no other prophet. The Messiah is bound to come and when he does, you should promptly recognize and offer allegiance to him. This Messiah to come will be of moderate height and will be fair of complexion. He will defend Islam against other faiths and will expose and destroy pigs (i.e., remove from humanity the impurities associated with this animal). He will cancel *Jazia*. (meaning that as the use of force and

wars between countries on the basis of religion will not be taking place in that era, there will be no occasion to levy Jazia.)

This Hadith, while naming the Messiah as a prophet, also implies that anyone claiming to be a prophet between the Holy Prophet and the Messiah will not be a true prophet; and the words in the Hadith (اِنَّمَا زِلْ) clearly show that the reference is not to Jesus Christ, a past prophet, but the one who has yet to come.

Again in the well known Hadith compilation, *The Muslim*, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, named the future Messiah as prophet no less than 4 times in a single Hadith. This mode of repeatedly calling the future Messiah as a prophet was clearly designed to alert the *Ummah* not to be misled and to grasp this point with certainty.

Let us now take some of the Hadiths on which non-Ahmadies rely in support of their interpretation of the verse.

One of these is the Holy Prophet's saying "*Laa Nabiyya Ba'di*" that is, there is no prophet after me. However, the denial here is of a prophet with a new book and law, i.e., of law bearing prophet. That this is the correct interpretation of this Hadith is amply clarified and confirmed by *Ummal Momeeneen* Hazrat Ayesha—the closest and the most intelligent of the Holy Prophet's wives, who said:

قُولُوا إِنَّهُ خَاتَمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدَ

"O ye people you should say that the Holy Prophet is *Khatamun Nabiyeen*, but do not say that there will be no prophet after him."

It is obvious that Hazrat Ayesha was anxious that the words in a Hadith, "*Laa Nabiyya Ba'di*" may not be interpreted to close the door of every type of prophethood.

This is further confirmed by the proclamation of Hazrat Imam Shirani, in the 10th Century Hijri:

"The Holy Prophet's statement that there will be no prophet after him only meant that there will be no law bearing prophet after him."

The other Hadith relied upon by non-Ahmadies in support of their interpretation is: "*Innee Aakhirul Anbiya*"—I am the last

Prophet. This also relates to prophets with new book and law. This is clear by another saying of the Holy Prophet:

إِنِّي أَخِرُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَأَنَّ مَسْجِدِي أَخِرُ الْمَسَاجِدِ

“I am the last of the Prophets and my mosque
is the last mosque.”

He obviously implied that there will be no prophet like him as there will be no mosque of glory and piety like his mosque. Future mosques will not be of the same glory and will be a mere reflection of his mosque. The possibility of misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the words (إِنْ أَخِرُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ) was totally clarified by adding (مَسْجِدِي أَخِرُ الْمَسَاجِدِ) i.e., I am the last of the Prophets, in the same way and sense, as my mosque will be the last of the mosques.

We have seen how the Holy Quran and the Hadith — the two primary sources of Muslim faith and dogma — support the view that prophethood in service of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet is in no way in conflict with the status of Holy Prophet Muhammad as *Khatamun Nabiyeen*. Let us now see what views were expressed on this subject and how the *Khatamun Nabiyeen* verse was interpreted by acknowledged Muslim divines and Scholars over the past 14 centuries.

The well known Mujaddid Alfe Saani, Hazrat Shaikh Ahmad Farooqi Sarhindi, in his *Maktoobat* (Nos. 301 and 432 Vol.I) states:

“Following the advent of the *Khatmur-Rosul*, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, the attainment of prophethood by one of his followers, as a reflection and in service of the Holy Prophet, will in no way offend against or be in conflict with his status as *Khaatamur Rosul*. No doubts need be entertained in this regard.”

In the 6th century Hijra, Hazrat Mohayuddin Ibn Arabi, the world renowned Muslim scholar and commentator (who died in the year 638 Hijra) proclaimed in *Fatoohat-i-Makkiyya* (Vol.I, Page 545):

“We know this with certainty that in the Muslim *Ummah* there will be individuals whose status, according to Allah, will be of prophets but such prophethood will be without any new Law or *Shariah*.”

Again, in the same book (Vol. 2, pg. 3—Egyptian edition), Hazrat Ibn Arabi states:

“The prophethood which came to an end with the advent of the Holy Prophet was *Tashri’ee Nabuwat*, i.e., a prophethood with a new book and a new Law. There is no room for such prophethood after the Holy Quran. This is the correct meaning of the Hadith which contains the Holy Prophet’s saying that there is to be no prophet after him. The Hadith only conveys that after the Holy Prophet there can be no prophet who will replace his *Shariah* with another one. Henceforth whenever any prophet comes he will be subordinate to him and his *Shariah*.”

Again, the 6th Shiite Imam, Hazrat Jaffar Sadiq, in his book *Al-Saafi Sharah Osoolul Kaafi* (vol. III, Page 119) says:

“Allah raised prophets, messengers and Imams from the progeny of Hazrat Ibrahim, peace be on him. It is strange and unbelievable that while acknowledging these blessings among the progeny of Hazrat Ibrahim, peace be on him, people tend to deny this possibility in the case of the progeny and followers of Hazrat Muhammed.”

The well-known Sufi in the Islamic world, Hazrat Imam Abdul Wahab Shairani, who died in 1568, categorically states in his book *Al-Yawaqeeet-o-wal-Jawahir*, (Vol. III, Page 35):

“Remember that prophethood has not disappeared. Prophets can appear. The prophethood that has ceased to exist is only that which brings with it a new law.”

In other words, after Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, there can be no law bearing prophet.

Another eminent divine who died in 986 Hijra, namely Hazrat Imam Muhammad Tahir, says in his book *Durre Manthoor wa Takmela Majmaul Bihar* (page 85):

“Hazrat Ayesha’s statement, to call the Holy Prophet *Khatamun Nabiyeen* but not to say that there will be no prophet after him, was made keeping in view the advent of Hazrat Eisa (Jesus) (i.e., the Messiah’s coming). The Imam says that Hazrat Ayesha’s advice was in no way in conflict with the Hadith, *Laa Nabiyya Ba’ddee*, because by those

words the Holy Prophet only meant that there can be no law bearing prophet in future who will cancel his *Shariah* and Law. This Hadith does not debar the appearance of prophets who serve in fulfillment of Holy Prophet's mission without any change in his *Shariah*."

In a later period (12th Century Hijra), Hazrat Shah Waliullah Mohaddes Dehlavi, universally acknowledged as the *Mujaddid* (reformer) of the 12th century and very well known to the Muslims of the sub-continent of India, says:

"The end of prophethood with the Holy Prophet only means this that there can be no divine reformer (i.e., prophet) who will introduce a new *Shariah*.

Closer to our own period, there is the proclamation of the founder of *Madrasatul Uloom, Deoband*, Hazrat Maulvi Muhammed Qasim Naunotawi (who died in 1889). He says:

"The general public may conceive that *Khatamun Nabiyeen* means that the Holy Prophet was the last of the prophets but people of knowledge and understanding know it very well that being the first or last does not necessarily connote excellence. The words

وَلَكِنْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّينَ

are designed to convey the Holy Prophet's exalted and unequalled status and this alone is the correct interpretation. *Khatamiyyat-i-Muhammadi* is not in any way rejected or denied if a prophet appears after the Holy Prophet."

The above quotations from the writings of acknowledged divines and world renowned reformers are clear. From the earliest period of *Khilafat-i-Rashda*, including the most learned wife of the Holy Prophet, right up to the 19th century, they show that the Holy Prophet's title of *Khatamun Nabiyeen* in no way debars the appearance of prophets who bring no new Law (*Shariah*) and who are the servants and followers of the Holy Prophet and work for the fulfillment of his mission. This is exactly what the Ahmadies believe—no less and no more.

Having sought guidance from the Holy Quran and the Hadith on the subject and having analyzed the interpretation given by known and acknowledged divines and scholars over the past 14

centuries, let us now examine the two conflicting interpretations of the *Khatamun Nabiyeen* verse on the basis of rationality as well. In other words, if no guidance from the Holy Quran or the Hadith existed (which of course is not the case), which of the two interpretations seems more rational and more complimentary to the exalted status of the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be on him?

It has been an established divine practice that whenever darkness engulfed the earth and people went astray from the right path; when man abdicated his responsibilities to God and his fellow human beings, then God sent his Messengers and prophets to guide them back to the right path. According to a Hadith, there have been 124,000 prophets (of whom only 315 were law bearing prophets) since the creation of this world. In view of the Quranic verse:

فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا

“Thou will never find a change, a diviation in the way and practice of Allah” (35:44).

Why should it now be assumed that this *Sunnatullah* has been abandoned, particularly in this age which spiritually and morally is one of the darkest ever known. Read Hali, read Iqbal, read the news in the world press everyday, look around at the moral bankruptcy the world over and, in particular, the miserable and despicable plight of the Muslim World. Does it not cry for a divinely inspired reformer with direct communion and guidance from Allah? Even Maulana Madoodi asserts that the world situation demands a prophet; Let me quote from his writings (*Tarjuman-ul-Quran*, December 1942/January 1943 issue, Page 406):

“The majority of people look for a perfect man (مرد کامل)... in other words, they cry for a prophet, although orally they proclaim their faith in *Khatam-e-Nabuwat* (the end of prophethood). If anyone professes prophethood's continuance, they will do all to silence and destroy him. But in their heart of hearts they cry for a prophet and will settle for nothing less.”

The Promised Messiah in one of his poem says:

— وقتِ معاہدتِ سیماء کسی اور کا وقت — میں نہ آتا ترکوئی اور ہی آیا ہوتا۔

“The present age cries for a messiah. If I had not appeared someone else would have.”

It is incumbent on those who deny the possibility of a prophet of any sort to substantiate their claim that there has been a departure from the divine practice. No one has. No one can.

Strangely enough, however, the non-Ahmadies do believe that in the 14th Century Hijra, Allah will send a messiah for the reformation of mankind and that this messiah will be Jesus Christ himself in his own physical person. In other words despite their interpretation of the *Khatamun Nabiyeen* verse, which closes all doors of prophethood, they acknowledged that a prophet of the chain of Moses will be commissioned to reform the *Ummah* of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. What a compliment to the spiritual eminence of the Holy Prophet that his own teachings and spiritual training is incapable of producing a reformer and he is required to borrow the services of a prophet from another chain!!

On the other hand, Ahmadies in total consistency to their interpretation of the *Khatamun Nabiyeen* verse, believe that the Messiah, whose advent was foretold by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, will be a follower and servant of the Holy Prophet in the image and mould of Jesus Christ. This interpretation is consistent with the correct meaning of *Khatamun Nabiyeen*, it is in conformity with the prophecies of the Holy Prophet and is in keeping with his exalted and unparalleled status and glory.

We Ahmadies believe that the Holy Prophet as the Messenger of Allah and *Khatamun Nabiyeen* is not only the father of his spiritual progeny, but enjoys such spiritual supremacy that his true followers can attain the status of a non-law bearing prophet for the service of his mission. In other words, with Allah's grace and favor, the Holy Prophet, so to speak, is a prophet-maker—a position of glory and excellence not bestowed on any other prophet. How can such an interpretation be described as derogatory in any sense whatever, as cruelly alleged by our opponents?

This interpretation obviously, as indeed was intended by Allah, is of far greater excellence, eminence, and glory to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, than the assertion

that he brings to a close all types of prophethood. This is so because prophethood is a symbol and embodiment of Allah's mercy and grace for the guidance of mankind.

Let me conclude with some prophetic words from the Promised Messiah in his book *Tazkirat-ul-Shahadatin*, written in 1903: Look how inspired, how majestic, how full of conviction and faith his words are on the ultimate triumph of his divine mission in attaining the total supremacy of Islam:

“O ye people, hearken to my call, and remember that this is a prophecy of Allah who created heaven and earth. He will spread this community of His in all countries and will cause it to triumph over all others through force of reason and rationality. The days are approaching fast, nay they are near at hand, when only this one religion (namely Islam) will be remembered and acknowledged with respect, honor and pride. Allah shall shower on this faith (i.e., Islam) and this community (i.e., the Ahmadiyya Community) His Choicest and rare blessings and anyone who harbors designs to destroy it shall be condemned by Allah to utter failure. The supremacy of this faith shall remain unchallenged till the time the world comes to an end.

If people mock at me now then their mockery is of no consequence and can cause no harm, for there has been no prophet who has not been mocked at. It was, therefore, inevitable that the Promised Messiah be also subjected to mockery, as Allah Almighty says:

يُخَسِّرُ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ

“Alas for my servants! There comes not any messenger to them but they mock at him...” (36:31).

“The Third Century from this day shall not pass until all those who look for the descent of Jesus from heaven, Christians or Muslims, will despair of it and will forsake the false beliefs now fondly cherished by them. Then there will be one religion (i.e. Islam) and one leader Hazrat Muahammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him...

“I have been sent to sow a seed and I have sown it. It shall now grow and bear flowers and fruit in due season and there is none — none indeed — who can uproot it.”